Danita Pappas

Digital Games

Rhythm Billionaire -- <http://www.musictechteacher.com/quiz_rhythm_billionaire1/play.html>

a. This would be good for grades 3+, it uses math skills in a musical context

b. The game tests content knowledge of rhythm specifically - in an entertaining way.

c. components of the game—

This game has a fun, interactive interface. You first decide if you are playing a one player or two player game. Then, you get to choose one of 50 characters to be for the duration of the game. There are all kinds of from Einstein to a dinosaur. Half the fun was deciding who to be! There then followed a short introduction with music and graphics. The player starts at the bottom of a pyramid and “wins money” for correct answers. When a correct answer is given, the bell dings and green checkmarks float over the character who pumps a fist in the air while a box floats onto the screen that says “CORRECT!” (in green) The monetary amount is shown under the avatar. There is an ok button that when you push it another box appears that gives an explanation of the concept. You then go to the next rung up the pyramid until you reach the end. If you answer a question incorrectly, a buzzer honks and the avatar has a cloud of x’s evaporate over their head and they get an angsty look on their face. A big box with red letters says “INCORRECT” with the correct answer underneath it (as well as the negative money count). When you push ok, the box with the concept explanation comes onscreen. There is one helpline available in the form of 50/50. If you indicate that you want to use it, the game will ask again to be sure and then will remove two of the incorrect answer. There is also a timer feature and you can run out of time to answer a question. As long as you finish the game with positive points you are announced the winner and fireworks explode and it’s all sorts of exciting. If you end with negative money, the game says that they are sorry you didn’t get enough points.

If you choose a 2 player game, the questions are the same. Also, as long as a player gives the correct answer, it remains their turn. I think it would be better if it alternated and if one player answered incorrectly then the other player would get a chance to answer. It is not set up this way.

The benefit of a game like this one is positive reinforcement of learned musical concepts. I’ll use a question from the game as an example – “How many dotted half notes does it take to equal 15 counts?” As long as the student knows that a dotted half note equals three counts then they can divide 15 by three and get the correct answer of 5! The game doesn’t use complex rhythms, just eighth notes to whole notes and asks the player to do multiplication or division to achieve the correct answer.

The challenge to the game lies in the math and connecting it to music. You need to know what an eighth note is and how many of them it takes to make up 4 counts. It encourages a student to think before answering.